

## **Where is my America?**

I do not recognize my own country anymore. I grew up immediately after WWII, the beneficiary of the hundreds of thousands of lost lives sacrificed by the previous generation who died defending my rights. We spoke of these people as selfless patriots who did their duty, full well knowing that they were subordinating their lives to ideals that were greater and more powerful than themselves.

We inherited a few indisputable truths about our country and ourselves:

That we were a people blessed through the sacrifice of our ancestors; That we were equal under the law and free to pursue our life choices without government intervention or control;

That our government was in business to serve us, not the other way around; That government service was an honorable calling; That we lived by the rules of Man as long as they didn't conflict with those that were laid down by our Creator;

That we would defend the clear separation of powers guaranteed by our Constitution; That we enjoyed religious freedom and didn't have to defend or explain the observance of our religious holidays;

That we were allowed to protect ourselves and our private property; That our courts were not handmaidens of a political class and didn't legislate from the bench;

That we were free to earn a living and not see our taxes rise to the level of government spending but that government spending was keyed to our taxes;

That our children would be educated and that that education was administered locally by elected school boards who were not subservient to the Federal government; That our children were raised and disciplined by us, their parents;

That our country's finances would be spent wisely based on a thoughtfully constructed yearly budget;

That our foreign policy reflected our American values; That our foreign aid did not support corrupt foreign governments or organizations; That all life, no matter how young, old or fragile would be protected;

That the sanctity of the family was not something to be compromised; That the economic system of our country would not become a political football kicked around by ideologues who would transform it into an unworkable textbook theory of their choosing;

That our elected leaders held themselves to higher standards than the rest of us and were punished when they didn't; That our military was well-trained, well-equipped, strong and not a laboratory for social engineering;

That our government did not determine winners and losers in our private sector by investing our tax dollars in ideologically-driven technologies; That our government did not rescue endangered companies or industries but let them fail or succeed based on their own abilities;

That our lands and businesses could not be expropriated for frivolous purposes under an abusive eminent domain policy; That we were free to establish businesses and hire workers in any state we wished without fear of government reprisal;

That our workers were free to organize (or not) into unions; That marriage was a religious compact instituted and ordained by God and recognized by society - not the other way around;

That our privacy would not be invaded by our government; That our borders would be preserved and protected and that those who violated our immigration laws would be prosecuted or deported;

That our multi-ethnicity would not be used as an excuse for the de-Americanization of America's values and the breakdown of the homogeneous nature of American culture.

Many of us today are frustrated, angry and resentful at what our country has become. Our frustration is based on a sense of helplessness that our government has moved us so far from our natural orbit that we cannot be brought back into alignment with the gravitational pull of our Bill of Rights and Constitution.

Our anger is grounded in a deep-rooted belief that our institutions have failed us AND it is directed at the 'opposition' that seems determined to take us down a road that is diametrically different from the one our Founding Fathers laid out for us. We're also angry at ourselves for not keeping the rest of us honest and resentful that *the others* don't share our concern. This intense frustration, anger and resentment is nearing the boiling point, and the only thing that will keep it in check is, ironically, the very system that we feel has failed us.

We may be running out of opportunities to redress its deficiencies, and while the ballot box is the traditional means of doing so, I'm not sure that it will be enough for the millions of American citizens who feel abandoned and lost.

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